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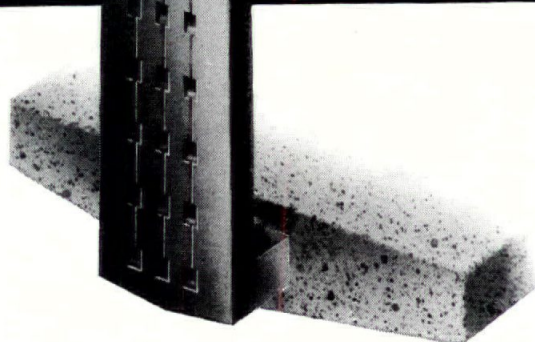
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THE TEXAS ARCHITECT

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CITIES CAN BE BEAUTIFUL

Yes, cities can be beautiful and that is not just a facetious statement. You may ask how can we make any progress to such a goal in a democracy? During a recent campaign to adopt zoning in Houston, (which is suffering from a lack thereof) there were folks with limited vision who called zoning and the planning which accompanies it as communistic. The trouble with most of us is that we have lost the most perfect tool that our founding fathers devised. It was the Town Meeting Hall. History records much excellent progress thru this system of communications. In our day we ought to be able to find at least twenty to fifty interested citizens in each community who want their physical environment to be the best possible. The establishment of Fine Arts Commissions (or give the group another title) and have these concerned people take stock of what we have. Where improvements are evident, let's program for such improvements. It is already a foregone conclusion that such commissions can be of invaluable service. This will help the community become a show place—it will help business and most of all it will be an extreme pleasure to live in one's home town.

Arthur Fehr

Cover

This cover photograph shows the San Jacinto Monument before it fell into disrepair. Photo Courtesy of the Texas Highway Dept.

MARCH, 1963

Page 3

THE PLIGHT OF THE SAN JACINTO MONUMENT

BY DON EDWARD LEGGE, AIA

One of Texas' most significant and popular monuments to its independence seems most certainly destined to abandonment unless immediate steps are taken toward its repair and preservation.

The history of the San Jacinto Monument battleground as a memorial to the early heroes of the Republic of Texas is a story of the interest of a few dedicated persons in the face of official disinterest. As early as the 1850's members of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas were trying to persuade the legislature to appropriate funds with which to acquire the site of the historic battle of San Jacinto. A report by Rosa Tod Hamner describes their renewed efforts before the turn of the century. "In 1897 the Chapter again appealed to the lawmakers to buy the battlefield. They were enabled to add force to this plea in a very tangible way on February 17, when at the request of the businessmen of Houston they assisted in entertaining the Governor and the 25th Legislature with an excursion to the historic spot."

"It was a gala occasion! Governor Culberson and his party proceeded down the bayou on Mr. C. B. Cushing's yacht, "Boston" while the bulk of the crowd boarded the barge "Jules." Aboard the barge tables had been erected



Texas Highway Department

and here the guests partook of a picnic lunch provided by the Daughters."

"A newspaper reporter heard one of the legislators remark while passing—"This is the finest lobby we ever appeared before'."

The report goes on to quote a contemporary newspaper account: "On the return trip a proposition was made to 'trip the light fantastic.' Tables were cleared from the decks of the barge, and, to the inspiring strings of Professor Lewis' band waltzes, polkas, lancers, and all others were enjoyed, not only by the younger people, but by some of mature years as well."

The Hamner report comments, "Small wonder that the law makers went back to Austin and drafted the bill that ultimately resulted in the purchase of the land marked as the immediate scene of the battle." Thus the battleground itself was finally acquired to be preserved for the people of the State.

Then in commemoration of the centennial of Texas' Independence the San Jacinto Monument itself was planned as a joint project of the United States and a number of its agencies and the State. The Monument was conceived by Architect Alfred C. Finn as a great obelisk in a setting of formal gardens. The shaft of Texas buff-limestone rises 570 feet above the famous battlefield. Its base has two broad terraces which lead from a reflecting pool 200 feet wide and 1750 feet long, large enough to mirror the shaft from bottom to top. The entrance to the base building is through heavy bronze doors on which are reliefs of the six flags of Texas. These lead through the Hall of Honor holding statues of Texas heroes. This Hall and its adjacent rooms were designed to house the San Jacinto Museum of History.

On the outside of the base are eight limestone panels engraved with a brief account of the history of Texas. At the base of the shaft itself is a sculptured frieze depicting significant phases in the Anglo-American colonization of Texas. At its apex is a star 34 feet high.

At the rear of the base building is an amphitheatre designed to seat 5,000 persons. Improvements to the grounds included protective sea bulkheads, markers for actions of the battle, extensive landscaping, picnic areas and walks and roads. In recent years the battleship "Texas" has been moored in a slip on the grounds.

The monument and the museum are operated by the San Jacinto Museum of History Association, a non-profit educational corporation under a contract with the Board of Control.

The museum, originally equipped through public subscription, is unique among American museums in that its purpose is to re-visualize the history of Texas and the Spanish southwest and collect, preserve and exhibit historic material and maintain a library and archives not

only for research and educational purposes but for the promotion of friendship and understanding between the people of Texas and Mexico, Spain, France and the Latin American Republics. Its collection includes some 400,000 pages of manuscripts, 7,000 relics, and 1,400 items in its picture collection. The general plan of the museum's permanent exhibits outlines the history of the region in a continuous chronological line.

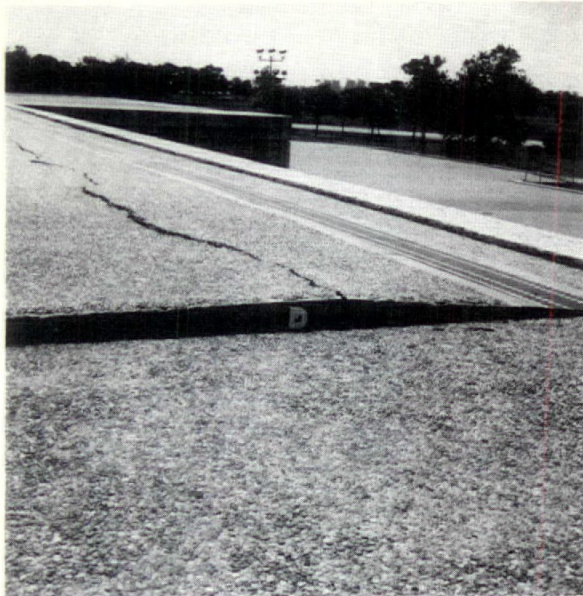
Now, however, this irreplaceable collection stands frequently covered with plastic sheets to protect it from water which continually seeps into the building. Since the completion of the monument some 25 years ago funds have not been available to perform ordinary maintenance, hence, where mortar has fallen from the joints of the stone, they remain open. Where lightning has dislodged chunks of stone from the obelisk, the holes remain. It has been impossible to eliminate peeling of the interior paint and to preserve ceiling materials because of the moisture. The stone is discolored with a quarter-century's accumulation of industrial grime. The monumental bronze entrance doors have long since worn out their hinges and now must be dragged open and closed.

The walls retaining the base terraces have slid from their original position and allowed the terrace paving to fall and create wide cracks. The sluice gates for the reflecting pool, for years inoperable, allow the pool to overflow and inundate most of the adjacent gardens and walkways. The pool itself has approximately a foot of silt in its bottom, accumulated over the years, thus the water is muddy and no longer reflects the image of the Monument.

The grounds themselves have deteriorated as has the Monument. Walkways and drives have broken and eroded. The bulkheads which originally kept out the sea water have been breached in many places and the ground is fast eroding. One of these breaches has caused such erosion of the battleship slip that the "Texas" now lists nearly 10 degrees.

As if to add insult to injury, hurricane Carla and its accompanying tornado inflicted heavy damage to the building and grounds. Both caretaker cottages were demolished. The rest houses, concession stand and toilet facilities were heavily damaged. Smaller monuments were





blown down and broken. Many trees and gardens, not already dead from the drought of the 50's were destroyed.

The condition of the San Jacinto Monument provoked an article by John Gaines in the Galveston Daily News on February 21, 1962: "The Texas Heritage at San Jacinto is crumbling along with the monument which rises 570 feet above the boggy battlefield, certainly not from neglect on the part of its dedicated workers but rather from the crush of political mockery in Austin."

"Legislation is accomplishing what General Santa Anna could not and unless stronger hearts prevail, the world-famed monument and museum might be lost forever and cattle may graze once more on the field where Texas won her independence."

"George A. Hill III, President of the San Jacinto Museum of History Association, stated "What is squarely in front of each of us who have an interest in and concern for the San Jacinto Monument is a simple fact that, unless relieved by the State of Texas the Monument will become inoperable for want of repairs."

"The Museum is, in fact, closed to the public at the present time (1962), and must of necessity remain closed until adequate roof repairs—have been made."



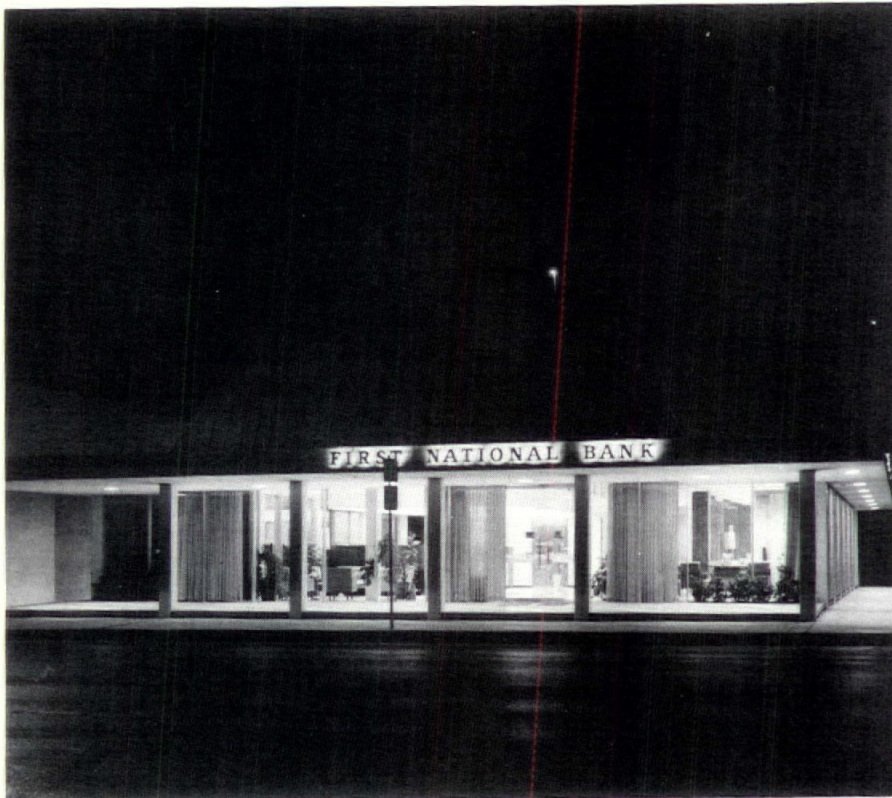


The State Board of Control asked for an appropriation of approximately \$18,000 from the legislature in 1961. They received \$5,000 specified to be spent on roads and curbs.

Near the Monument itself stands a great bronze sundial. Its inscription reads "The hours, days and years of unfolding time shall never dim the spirit of a liberty kindled on this field of battle."

Perhaps not. But time and neglect have taken their toll. The Monument and the grounds are a disgrace and a waste.

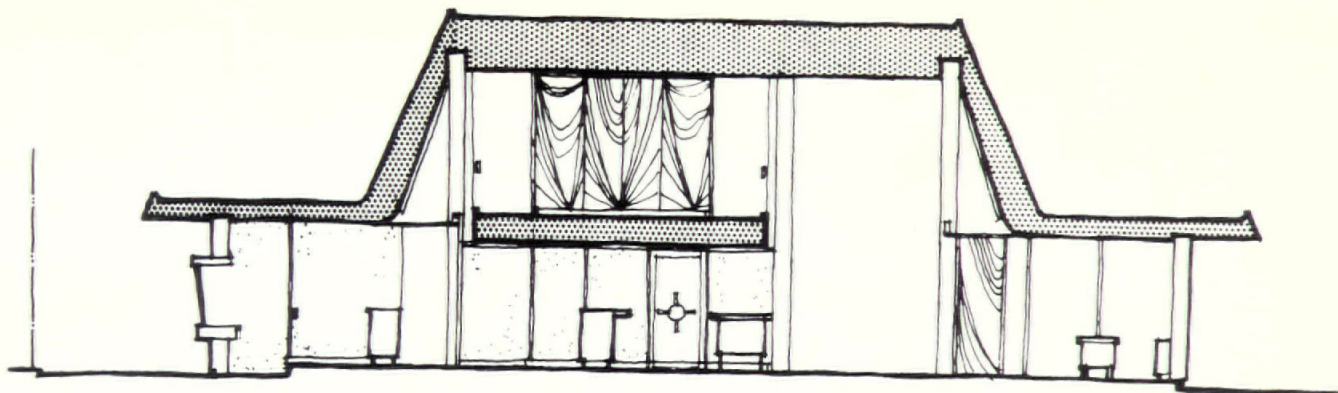
The Monument and improvements need to be repaired and refurbished. The grounds should be replanned. New roads and walks and gardens, picnic areas and parking places need to be planned and built. Concession buildings, toilet facilities and caretaker cottages should be rebuilt in a character compatible with the Monument itself. This work if accomplished piecemeal would make the Monument simply useable. It deserves something more. Architects, Engineers and Landscape Architects should be retained to undertake a thorough study of the causes of the problems in and about the Monument and to develop a comprehensive redevelopment plan for the restoration of the Monument to its intended grandeur.



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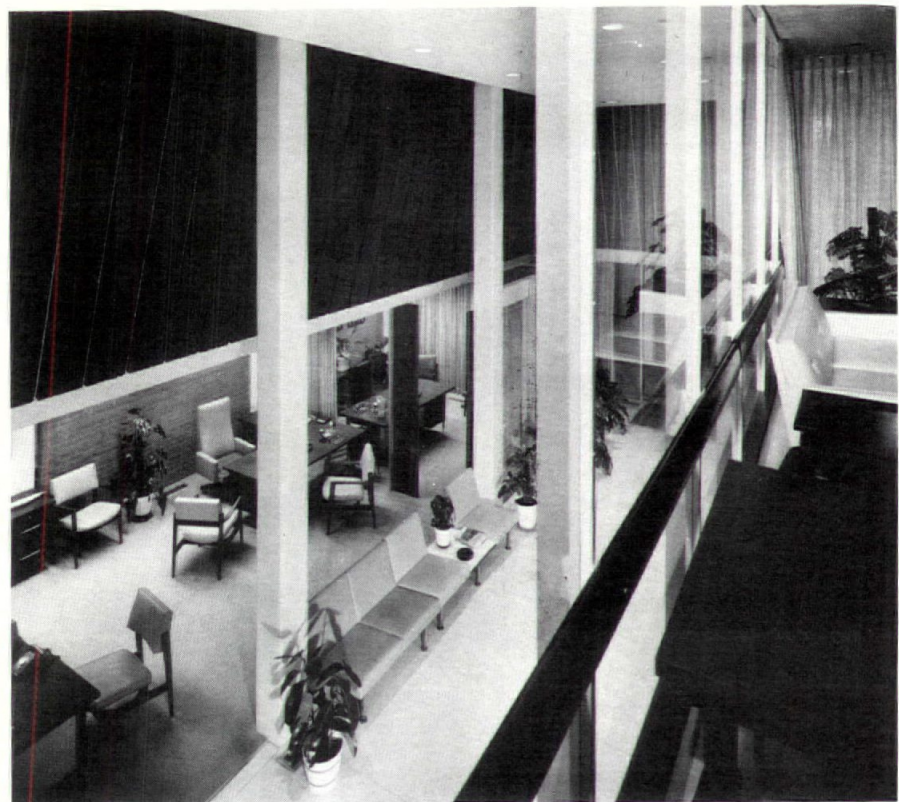
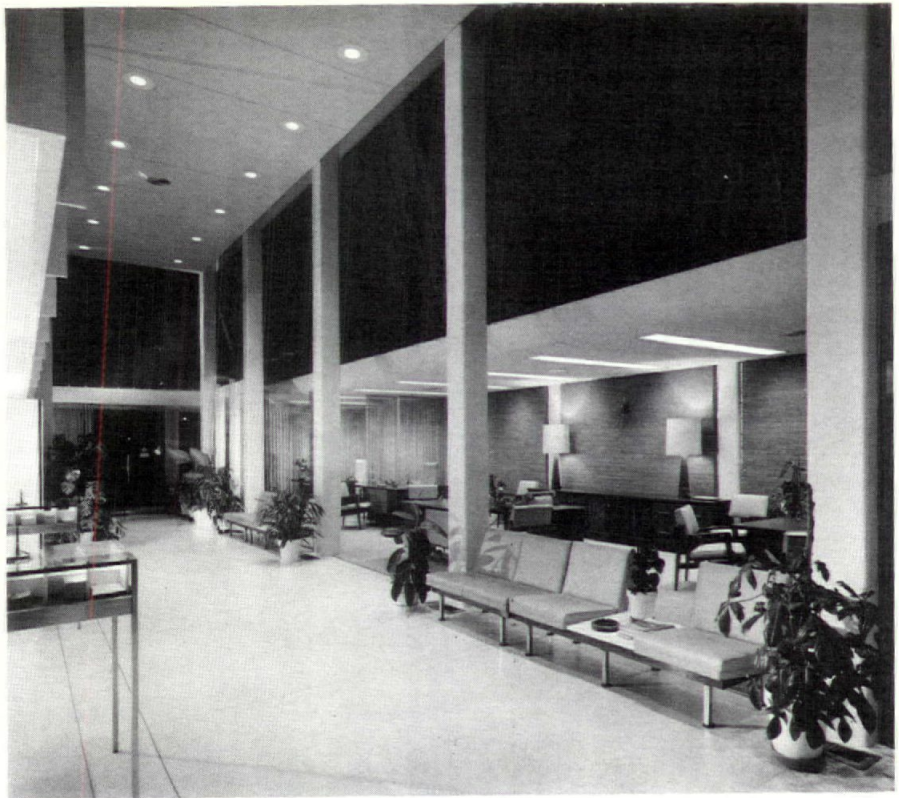
The building was programmed to be unmistakably modern, and still blend with the old business establishments that had escaped the carrara glass modernization of the 30's. The directors wanted their bank to be *THE* place where people would meet.

The low protective overhang around the entire building grows into porches at both ends of the building to promote "gatherings" and "meet me at the 1st National."



Inside the entrance a lounge-display area promotes air-conditioned friendliness. The low perimeter roof sweeps up to a two-story center to make volume for the mezzanine, a meeting room for civic organizations as well as the bank board.

The Mezzanine is suspended from the major structure and cleanly defines the teller activity below.



UT STUDENT WINS REYNOLDS PRIZE

Frederick C. Matthews of Belton has won a \$200 Reynolds Aluminum Prize in competition with other University of Texas architecture students.

The prize is given annually for the "best original design of a building component." Matthews' winning entry was the design of a three-way roof system.

The design has been entered, along with winners from other participating schools of architecture in the U. S., in the Reynolds national contest.

The national prize provides a cash award of \$5,000, divided equally between the winning student and his school. The student's \$2,500 must be used for further education. The prize will be presented during the American Institute of Architects' convention in Miami, Fla., May 6-9.

Matthews, a fourth-year student, plans to practice architectural design following graduation. He hopes to specialize in public buildings for Texas and the Southwest.

The Texas Architectural Foundation offers scholarships in architectural education and sponsors research in the profession.

Contributions may be made as memorials: a remembrance with purpose and dignity.

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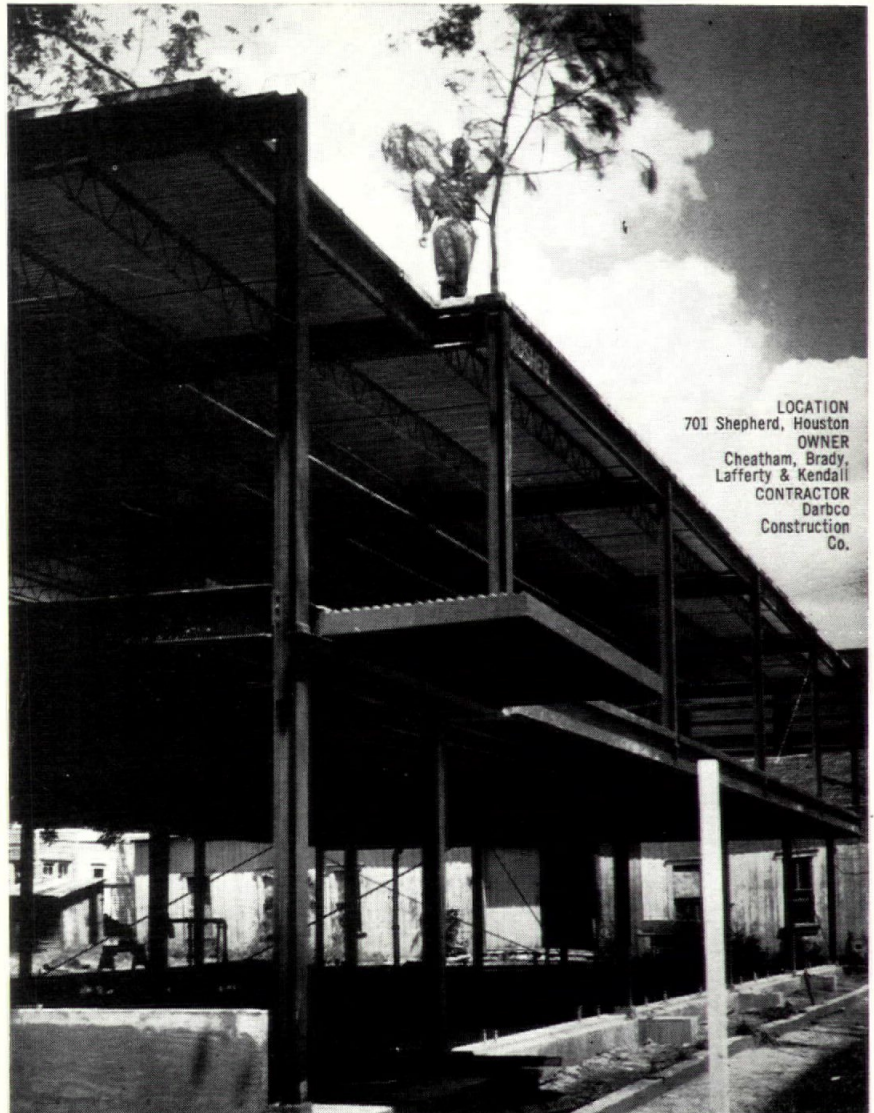
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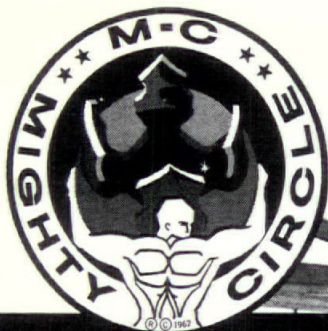


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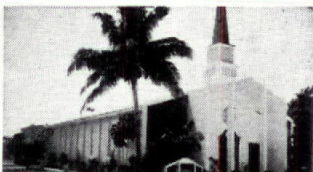
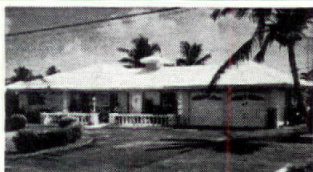
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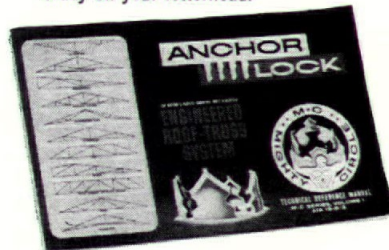
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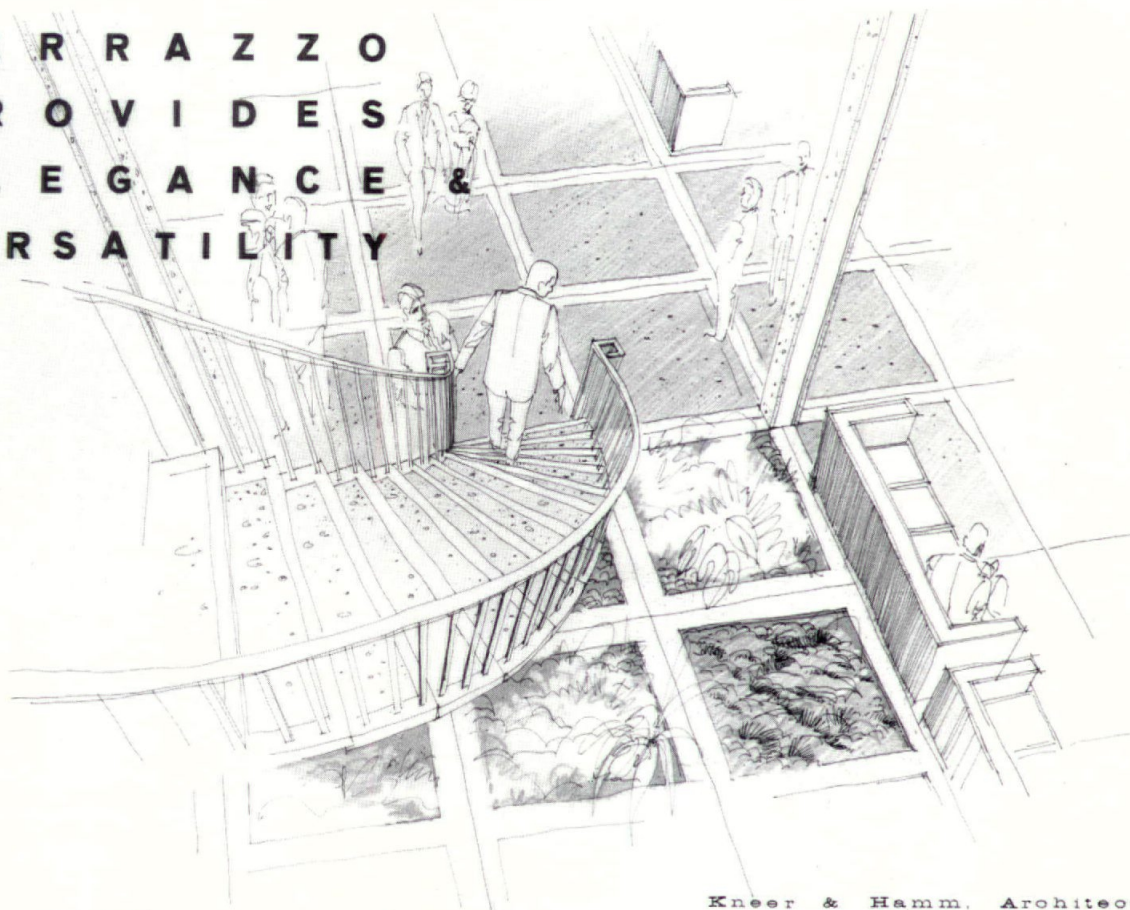
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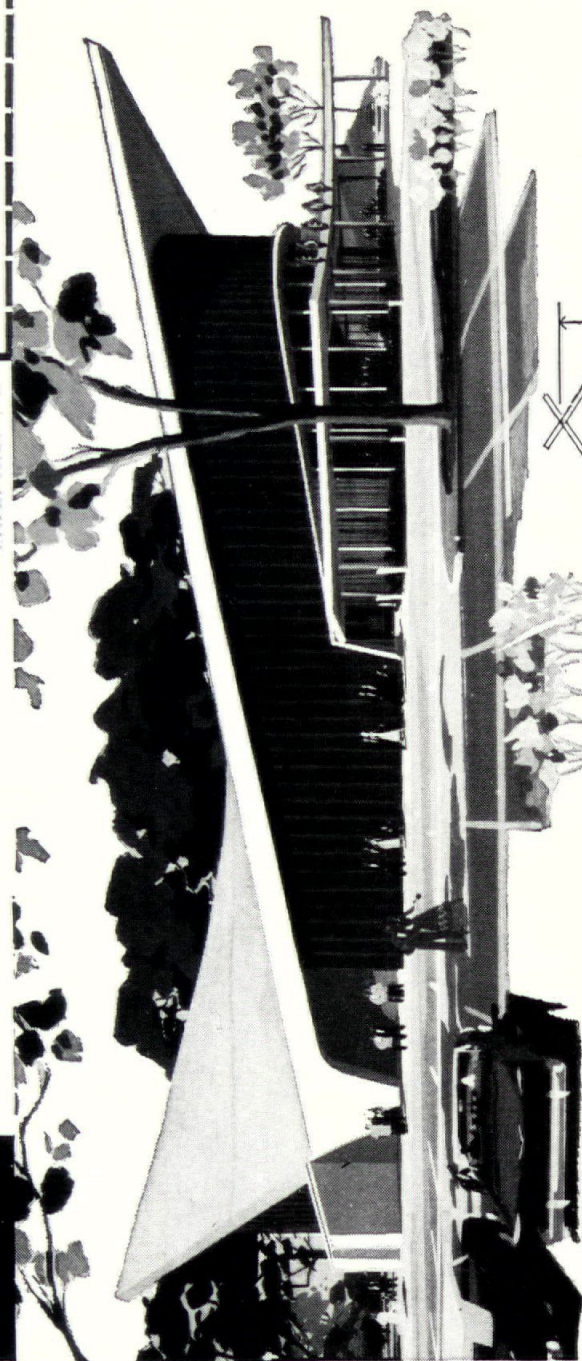
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No. 6 hyperbolic parabolooids

a.i.a. file: 4-a

Prepared as a service to architects by Portland Cement Association
Clip along dotted line



Curves from straight lines. The hyperbolic paraboloid shell roof is, in effect, a three-dimensional "sheet" of concrete in which strength and rigidity are accomplished not by increasing the thickness of the sheet, but by curving it in space. Despite its double curvature, this shape can be formed entirely of straight pieces—as can be seen in the side elevation at left.

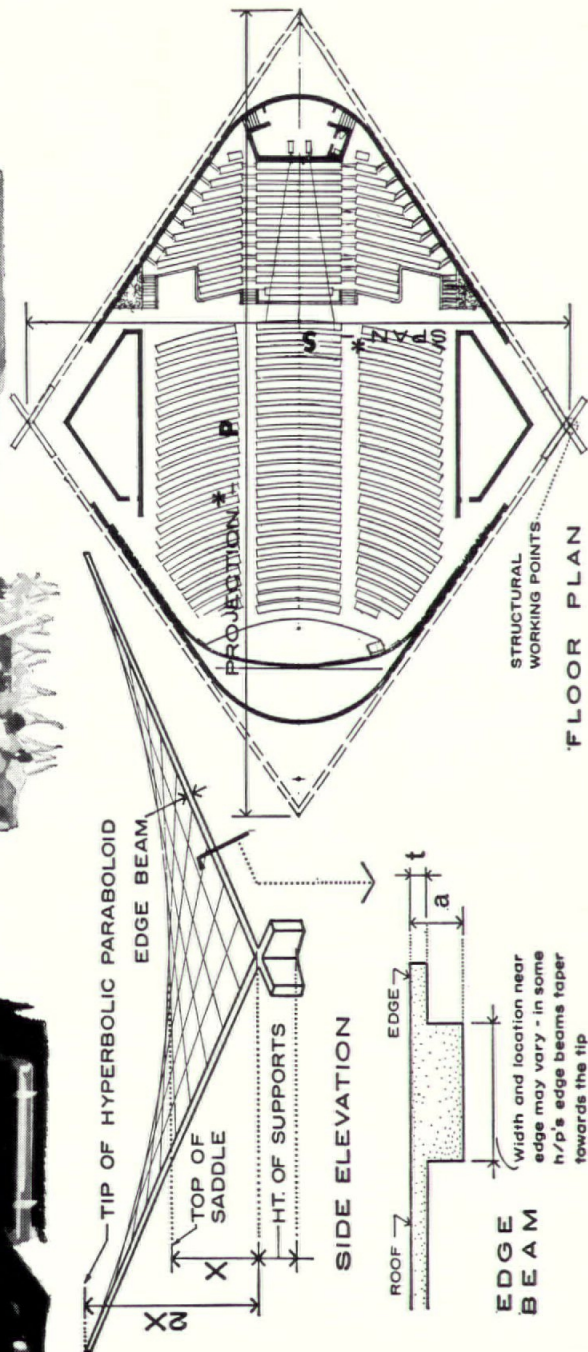
The concrete roof shown will be the largest single hyperbolic paraboloid of its type in the United States. The building it will cover is being constructed to house the 1,350-seat Edens Theatre in Northbrook, Illinois.

This saddle shell roof will measure 159 ft. between working points at the abutments and 221 ft. from tip to tip. The shell will be only four inches thick.

H/P's, as they are called for short, are exceptionally adaptable to churches, auditoriums and, as shown here, for theatres.

Get complete technical literature on hyperbolic parabolooids. (Free in U.S. and Canada only.) Send a request on your letterhead.

Architect: Perkins and Will, AIA, Chicago, Illinois
Engineer: The Engineers Collaborative, Chicago



HYPERBOLIC PARABOLOID SPAN DATA

SPAN	PROJECTION min.-max.	X (1) min.-max.	a (2)	t (3)	REINFORCING (4)
50'	50 - 70'	3 - 5'	1'	2 3/4"	2 - 3 lb.
60'	60 - 85'	4 - 6'	1'	2 3/4"	2 - 3 lb.
75'	75 - 105'	6 - 9'	1 1/2'	3"	3 - 4 lb.
100'	100 - 140'	9 - 13'	2'	3 1/4"	3 - 4 lb.
125'	125 - 175'	13 - 20'	2 1/2'	3 1/2"	4 - 5 lb.
150'	150 - 210'	17 - 25'	3'	4"	5 - 7 lb.

(1) figures given are recommended lower limits; maximum feasible limit = S/5.
(2) average depth of edge beams. (3) average shell thickness in inches. (4) average reinforcing steel of hyperbolic parabolooids in pounds per square foot of surface.

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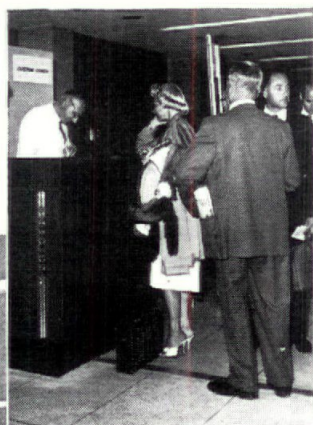
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